

falls in fewer events — fewer rainy days and fewer storms — but with much more intensity and volume. Snow that now falls as rain, stealing from a kind of “water savings account” that whole regions rely on, where winter snows pile up in mountain ranges, then melt gradually through the spring and summer to provide a steady flow of water.

Every day we’re seeing the dawn of a kind of brutal intensity to the climate, and to the weather, that feels all new. Fueled by one record-dry summer after another, megafires rage across the American West. Nourished by unusually warm ocean temperatures, slow-moving hurricanes in the Atlantic and supertyphoons in the Pacific explode with power and intensity just before coming ashore, where they release torrential, flooding rains.

We’re used to separating out our experience of water, especially in the developed world. There’s the water we use every day at home, in offices and factories, on farms. And then there’s the water out in the environment — the water that either comes, sometimes in destructive torrents, or doesn’t come, for months that add up to drought.

Climate change is going to erase that convenient distinction. The human water systems we’ve created, and that we all rely on, are going to look brittle and inadequate in the face of what’s coming.

The most important principle for adapting to the new world of water is this: Water does not respond to wishful thinking. Water problems don’t get better on their own. Just the opposite: The longer you wait to tackle a water problem of any kind, from a leak in the ceiling of your living room to a sea-level rise in your city, the harder, and the more expensive, that problem is to solve.

That’s not just true directly. Well-managed water undergirds the entire economy. But we don’t appreciate that very often. A city that floods once a week, a city that has to ration drinking water, a city that has to brace for destruction with every hurricane season or every fire season: Those are not places with stable, appealing economic futures.

We need to adapt to a new world. And we need to appreciate two more key ideas when it comes to water. First, we know how to solve every water problem that exists in the world — in engineering terms. We don’t need a Manhattan Project or a moon shot to tackle water. But the hardest part of most water problems is the people part. It’s getting people to see the water situation in a clear-eyed way — with realism, not optimism. And then getting people to change their behavior.

The second thing to appreciate is that all water problems are local — and that’s where they must be solved. The United States is a perfect example of a rich, smart country with a wild array of water problems. Not only is there no active national strategy for tackling them; in most cases there isn’t even national guidance.

But that can be liberating for cities, for regions, for states. The smartest communities — in the United States and around the world — aren’t waiting to tackle water and climate change. They aren’t waiting for the alarm from Washington, or the guidance, or even the financing.

Especially in the developed world, we’ve had a century-long, highly engineered golden age of water, in which we left the management of it to the experts, and most of us never had to give water a thought. It was invisible in our daily life. We need to see the new age of water turbulence with realism, with urgency, and with a sense that water is something all of us are going to have to grapple with.

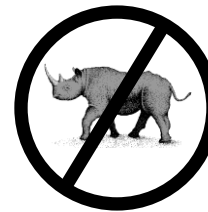
The golden age is over. Water isn’t going to be invisible anymore. The future of water is now.

# THE EARLY RISER

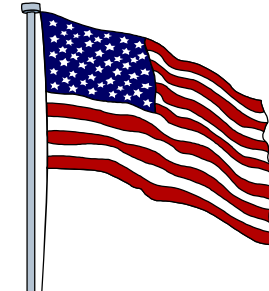
EVERY ROTARIAN  
US \$100  
EVERY YEAR



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DON'T BE A R.I.N.O.  
(Rotarian In Name Only!)



## ROTARY PRAYER

Oh Lord, and giver of all good, we  
thank Thee for our daily food.

May Rotary friends and Rotary  
ways, help to serve Thee all of our  
days.

## THE ROTARY CLUB OF WICHITA FALLS NORTH



2020-21 R.I. Officers - D5790

President of Rotary International: Holger Knaack

District Governor: Roger Paschal

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Secretary: Tom Sheriff ~ Treasurer: Ann Lucas

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Directors: Clint Wood – Phil Waggoner ~ Gary Southard ~ Mike Crocker

Tom Cale ~ Tom Sheriff & Troy Secord (PDG Ex-Officios)

Website: [www.wichitafallsnorthrotaryclub.org](http://www.wichitafallsnorthrotaryclub.org)

**FUTURE PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS**

January 29-----	Mike Crocker
February 5-----	Larry Gunnell
February 12-----	Ajay Kumar
February 19-----	Ann Lucas
February 26-----	Bill Neale
March 5-----	Rob Noble
March 12-----	Jeani Secord
March 19-----	Troy Secord
March 26-----	Tom Sheriff

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**NEWS FROM OUR LAST "VIRTUAL" MEETING:**

Clint presented the Rotary Prayer and David presented the Pledges.

There was a club anniversary announced for Bill Neale as well as for our club on 28 January. Our club was chartered in 1983. Bill is our lone remaining charter member.

Mike announced that he and Ann were going to go shopping for items for the 3 family pantry at Scotland Park Elementary School (SPES). Individual members should shop for items for the student's food pantry such as snacks, etc. Joe Clements reported to Mike that SPEC was good on clothing items.

The club will have a club assembly next week. Some items to discuss are the proposed increase in flag subscription rates, putting out flags on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11, 2011 disaster in New York City, and joining the Southwest Club and the Burkburnett Club in displaying the flags for a week to promote awareness for wearing masks during the pandemic.

David Collins presented the program. David talked about the changes to the Child Protective Services and the program for the children at Christmas time.

It was noted that there would be a funeral service for former member Mary K. Carroll-Biggs on February 13, 2021. A person can attend either in person or online. The club had donated \$100.00 to The Rotary Foundation in Mary K.'s memory.

**NEWS FROM ROTARY INTERNATIONAL:**

**WATER**

**THE GOLDEN AGE OF WATER IS OVER**

THE WATER SYSTEMS HUMANS HAVE CREATED AND RELY ON WILL LOOK INADEQUATE IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

I was in Charleston, South Carolina, to talk about water, and a university faculty member there explained how dramatically life has changed in the past few years in that beautiful waterfront city.

As recently as the early 2000s, she said, Charleston had experienced a few flooding events a year — eight or 10. Not even one a month.

But in the past few years, Charleston has annually had 40 to 50 intrusive flood events. The flooding is so common and so disruptive, the woman explained, that she and her husband had to plan their lives around it. Their kids went to day care in one part of the city; they worked in another part. When the low-lying streets and intersections filled with seawater — as happens on average three times a month now — they were cut off from their children.

"We have to watch the weather, we have to watch the tides, we have to talk to the people at the day care," she said. "Because we could easily end up at the end of the day with no way to get the kids." There have been occasions when they didn't take the children to day care, because flooding was predicted during the day.

You don't have to imagine the future of water: It's here. It's happening right now, all around us.

That's the most obvious lesson from the flooding in Charleston, a single problem in a single U.S. city: The flooding is not devastating, but it is sudden, it's new, it's relentless, it's hugely disruptive, and it's not going away. When it comes to water, we aren't ready for what's happening to us right now. So we certainly aren't ready for the future.

In the past decade, we have made dramatic progress in water. In the 10 years between 2005 and 2015 (the most recent year for which there is U.S. data), the typical American went from using 100 gallons of water per day at home to using 83 gallons. If we were still consuming water at the rate we did in 2005, we would be using 5 billion more gallons of water a day than we are.

We've also made dramatic progress across the past 50 years. The United States today uses less water every day, for all purposes, than it did in 1965. We have tripled the size of the U.S. economy in that half-century without using a single new gallon of water. Which is to say, every gallon of water we use today does three times the work it did in 1965.

Farmers today use a little less water than farmers did in 1965 — but they irrigate 45 percent more land and raise twice as much food.

That's all good news. If climate change weren't transforming everything about who gets water, and how much, it would be great news — the foundation of a new water ethic. As it is, the progress we've made in the United States and around the world will cushion the impact of climate change. But that impact is likely to be so dramatic, we may not notice.

We don't often connect the dots when we talk about the impact of climate change, but it is almost all about water. Rain that doesn't fall anymore where we expect it. Rain that